



*State of New Jersey*  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
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PHILIP D. MURPHY  
*Governor*

SHEILA Y. OLIVER  
*Lt. Governor*

SHEREEF M. ELNAHAL, MD, MBA  
*Commissioner*

Executive Directive No. 19-004

**Addition of Suboxone<sup>®</sup> to the Advanced Life Support Optional Formulary**

**WHEREAS**, Executive Order No. 219 (2017) declared that “[t]he abuse of and addiction to opioid drugs is a public health crisis in New Jersey, necessitating the marshalling of all appropriate resources to combat its harmful effects on the citizens of our State;” and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Health acknowledges the ongoing public health crisis occurring in New Jersey due to opioid use disorders and is committed to garnering all possible resources to combat the opioid crisis plaguing our great State; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Health recognizes that mobile intensive care paramedics provide life-saving and life-sustaining pre-hospital care to the residents and visitors of New Jersey; and

**WHEREAS**, N.J.A.C. 8.41-6.1 outlines the medications and therapeutic agents that mobile intensive care paramedics are authorized to administer to treat injured and/or ill patients; and

**WHEREAS**, N.J.A.C. 8.41-6.1(b) provides a list of optional medications and therapeutic agents that mobile intensive care paramedic programs may choose to carry on their mobile intensive care units and permit their mobile intensive care paramedics to administer to patients in the pre-hospital setting; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to 8.41-9.11(b), the Mobile Intensive Care Unit (“MICU”) Advisory Committee may request permission from the Department for mobile intensive care paramedic programs to carry a medication that is not listed in N.J.A.C. 8:41-6.1 by providing the Department with a written request specifying the drug to be added to the formulary, the public health considerations supporting the

addition of the drug and the time period the additional drug will be carried by providers, which cannot exceed six months; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 19, 2019, the Department of Health received a joint letter from the Chair and Vice Chair of the MICU Advisory Committee recommending the addition of Suboxone<sup>®</sup>, or its generic equivalent, to the optional formulary to treat and manage acute withdrawal symptoms precipitated by the emergent administration of naloxone to reverse a life-threatening opioid overdose; and

**WHEREAS**, the majority of the membership of the MICU Advisory Council, consisting of medical directors from every mobile intensive care program in the State of New Jersey, voted to affirm the addition of Suboxone<sup>®</sup> to the optional formulary; and

**WHEREAS**, overwhelming scientific evidence, including a recent evidenced-based consensus study report titled, *Medications for Opioid Use Disorder Saves Lives*, demonstrates that buprenorphine, the primary ingredient in Suboxone<sup>®</sup>, is an integral medication to combat opioid use disorders and reduce overdose deaths; and

**WHEREAS**, Department staff reviewed the MICU Advisory Council's submission against the scientific evidence surrounding the use of Suboxone in the fight against opioid use disorders and Executive Order 219's call to amass resources to combat the opioid crisis and recommended the granting of the MICU Advisory Council's request.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Shereef M. Elnahal, Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Health, by virtue of the authority vested in me hereby:

- (1) GRANT the MICU Advisory Councils' request to add Suboxone<sup>®</sup>, or the generic equivalent, to the list of medications and therapeutic agents in the optional formulary for mobile intensive care paramedics; and
- (2) REQUIRE the MICU Medical Directors to provide comprehensive training to and competency assessments for all paramedics under their command on the indications, contraindications, dosage requirements, and medical documentation of administering Suboxone<sup>®</sup>, or the generic equivalent; and

(3) PERMIT the MICU Medical Directors to authorize paramedics to administer sublingual Suboxone<sup>®</sup>, or the generic equivalent in any FDA approved form, to a patient following the emergent administration of naloxone to reverse a life-threatening overdose.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDERED** that this Executive Directive shall become effective immediately. The Executive Directive shall cease to have effect six months after today's date, unless extended by the Department, pursuant to the requirements set forth in N.J.A.C. 8.41-9.11(b)(1).

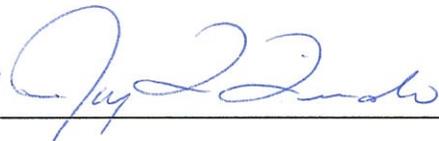


Shereef M. Elnahal, M.D., M.B.A.  
Commissioner of Health

6/24/19

Dated

Attest:



Attorney at Law  
State of New Jersey